

USACHPPM
HEALTH INFORMATION OPERATIONS (HIO) UPDATE

05 September 2003

The HIO Update provides information regarding global medical and veterinary issues of interest to the United States (US) Army. The update does not attempt to analyze the information regarding potential strategic or tactical impact to the US Army and as such, should not be regarded as a medical intelligence product. Medical intelligence products are available at <http://mic.afmic.detrick.army.mil/>. The information in the HIO Update should provide an increased awareness of current and emerging health-related issues.

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HOT TOPICS

Cholesterol Drug Relieves Leg Artery Disease

01 September – Reuters reported treatment with the statin-type cholesterol-lowering drug Lipitor improves pain-free walking for patients with [claudication](#), caused by [peripheral artery disease](#). In a double-blind study described in the latest issue of the American Heart Association's journal *Circulation*, a multicenter team randomly assigned 354 patients with peripheral artery disease and claudication to take Lipitor or an inactive placebo pill for 1 year. After 12 months, there was no significant difference between the two groups in the maximum time they could walk on a treadmill, the main outcome measured in the study. However, the amount of time patients could walk pain-free did improve by 63% in those taking 80 milligrams of Lipitor atorvastatin. In contrast, pain-free walking time improved by 38% in patients taking 10 milligrams of Lipitor or the placebo. [View Article](#)

Clues to Breast Cancer Spread

01 September – BBC News reported British scientists have taken a step forward in their effort to find out why [breast cancer](#) spreads to other parts of the body. They have found that certain types of cancerous cells are attracted to other areas by a naturally occurring protein. They have shown that blocking this protein, which is called uPA, can stop the cancer from spreading. Writing in the *Journal of Cell Biology*, they said the discovery could lead to new treatments to fight the disease. [View Article](#)

Dental Procedure May Reduce Risk Of Premature Birth

28 August – Science Daily reported a non-surgical dental procedure may reduce the risk of preterm birth in pregnant women with [periodontal disease](#), according to new study findings. The report was published in the *Journal of Periodontology* and is based on 366 pregnant women who had periodontitis and found as much as an 84 percent reduction of premature births in women who were less than 35 weeks pregnant and who received scaling and root planing. Researchers also found that adjunctive metronidazole therapy did not improve pregnancy outcome. In fact, women who were given the antibiotic after scaling and root planing had more preterm births than patients receiving scaling and root planing and a placebo. [View Article](#)

Experimental Vaccine Gives Anthrax Both Barrels

01 September – Reuters reported scientists in Boston have developed a double-action [anthrax](#) vaccine that simultaneously protects against both the bacterium that causes anthrax (*Bacillus anthracis*) and the deadly toxins it releases. A compound called poly-gamma-D-glutamic acid (PGA) helps *Bacillus*

anthracis multiply in the body by forming a capsule around the bacterium preventing detection by the immune system. As it spreads, it secretes toxins. To construct their vaccine, the Boston group joined PGA to an essential component of anthrax toxin, known as protective antigen (PA), which is the target of the existing anthrax vaccine. Mice immunized with the double-barreled vaccine developed high serum levels of antibodies against both components, the team reports in the early edition of the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences. [View Article](#)

Hundreds Sickened on Cruise Ship

02 September – CNN News reported more than 300 people aboard a North Atlantic cruise ship became sick with a [Norwalk-type virus](#), causing the vessel to cut its voyage short and head for New York. At least 322 passengers fell ill during an outbreak aboard the Regal Princess, U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention officials said. The ship was bound for New York from Copenhagen, Denmark on a 16-day trip. It was expected to dock in New York Harbor early, cutting its voyage short by two days. The ship set out August 18 and stopped in Britain and Ireland, then left for Iceland. As it prepared to go to the open sea, passengers and crew became more ill, prompting the decision to skip a stop in Newfoundland. [View Article](#)

Red-Skinned Produce May Help Prevent Certain Types of Cancer, Research Indicates

31 August – VOA News reported researchers in Singapore said the same foods that help prevent cancers might also be able to treat breast and prostate cancer. Huynh The Hung, a cancer researcher at Singapore's National Cancer Center who conducted experiments on mice implanted with breast and prostate tumors, said that when these mice were fed phyto-chemicals, which are found in red-skinned fruits and vegetables, their tumors began to shrink. He says the phyto-chemicals work by ending the cancer cells' ability to redirect nutrients from healthy cells. [View Article](#)

Stem Cells May Eliminate Need for Heart Transplant

01 September – Reuters reported four out of a group of five seriously ill Brazilian heart-failure patients no longer needed a heart transplant after being treated with their own stem cells, the doctor in charge of the research said. Such "regenerative medicine," in which stem cells extracted from patients' own bone marrow are used to rebuild tissue, may one day become commonplace for patients with damaged or diseased hearts, some doctors believe. Hans Fernando Rocha Dohmann of the Pro-Cardiaco Hospital in Rio de Janeiro said his four patients had such a marked improvement in blood supply after stem cell treatment that they were removed from the list of those needing a heart transplant. The whole area of stem cell research is highly controversial because the most promising of such cells are taken from embryos, usually obtained from fertility clinics. Embryonic stem cells are capable of turning into nearly 200 different tissue types. [View Article](#)

USEUCOM

Algeria: Outbreak of Conjunctivitis Affects at Least 40,000 in Algiers Area

29 August – ProMed reported health authorities in Algeria are struggling to cope with an outbreak of [viral conjunctivitis](#). Reports say up to 40,000 people have been infected over the past week, but the number could be higher because a large number of those infected are seeking treatment in private

health facilities. Hospitals and health centers in the capital Algiers are being overwhelmed, as the highly infectious conjunctivitis continues to spread. Most of the victims come from the Boumerdes area, which was struck by a massive earthquake in May 2003. Doctors said the spread of the eye infection was being exacerbated by the poor hygienic conditions that still prevail in the areas struck by the earthquake. To curb the spread of the infection, health authorities have announced that all those infected will be given free medication in public hospitals. However, some medical facilities are already reporting they are running out of medical supplies due to the high demand. They are also urging the public to exercise high levels of hygiene. [View Report](#)

Cholera in Liberia - Update

02 September – WHO reported on the basis of the assessment team's visit and analysis of the data, WHO has now reported a cumulative number of 6,353 cases since the beginning of the outbreak in Monrovia in June until 17 August. Systematic reporting of deaths from [cholera](#) has not been undertaken in health centers. WHO has put an emergency surveillance system in place to fill this gap. The first peak reached 935 cases during 7-13 July. The weekly average decreased by end July -early August, although the worsening security situation prevented cholera patients from attending health care facilities. Since the ceasefire and the improvement in security, the number of registered cases has been rapidly increasing. According to figures collected at cholera treatment centers in Monrovia, there were 727 registered cases during 4-10 August and 1203 cases during 11-17 August. More people are now returning to their homes or to refugee camps outside Monrovia; as a result, the cholera outbreak is spreading from central Monrovia to peripheral areas of the city and neighboring districts. [View Article](#)

Dutch Approve Cannabis as Prescription Drug

01 September –Reuters reported the Netherlands became the world's first country to make cannabis available as a prescription drug in pharmacies to treat cancer, [HIV](#) and multiple sclerosis patients, the Health Ministry said. The Netherlands is making the drug widely available to chronically ill patients amid pressure on countries like Britain, Canada, Australia and the United States to relax restrictions on its supply as a medicine. Dutch doctors will be allowed to prescribe it to treat chronic pain, nausea and loss of appetite in cancer and HIV patients, to alleviate MS sufferers' spasm pains and reduce physical or verbal tics in people suffering Tourette's syndrome. [View Article](#)

Efforts Increase to Control Cholera, Measles in Liberia

01 September – VOA News reported international health organizations are increasing their efforts to control outbreaks of [cholera](#) and [measles](#) among displaced people in war-torn Liberia. The World Health Organization (WHO) is chlorinating water in Liberia's capital, Monrovia, to stem a cholera epidemic. The WHO says it will purify the city's 5,000 water wells every four days. In the counties of Gbarpolu and Lofa, the U.N. Children's Fund is conducting an emergency immunization campaign against an outbreak of measles. Aid workers hope to vaccinate 42,000 children over the next week. [View Article](#)

Germany: Cruise Passenger Dies of Legionnaires'

28 August – ProMed reported a passenger of a cruise ship, which docked in Germany after a Greenland tour, has died of [Legionnaires' disease](#), the Saxony-Anhalt state health ministry said. The man had been treated for the disease at a hospital in Magdeburg after the Ocean Monarch, carrying 358 passengers, arrived in the northern port of Cuxhaven on Fri, 22 Aug 2003. Two other passengers had contracted the disease and 6 people had shown symptoms, officials said. All the passengers,

including 218 Germans, had left the ship on Fri, 22 Aug 2003. Health officials have appealed to any of the passengers suffering from flu-like symptoms to contact a doctor immediately. [View Report](#)

Guinea: Yellow Fever

02 September – ProMed reported PANA has learned from medical sources that 22 cases of [Yellow Fever](#) were registered in Yomou, Guine Forestiere, more than 1000 km south west of the capital, Conakry. A vaccination campaign for all ages was carried out between 16--26 Aug 2003. They had 20,000 doses of vaccine for a population of 150,000. [View Report](#)

Malawi: Leprosy Resurfaces

31 August – ProMed reported about 6 years after the Malawi government and the World Health Organization (WHO) declared Malawi free from [leprosy](#), the disease has resurfaced. The Harry Foundation for Development (Hafod), a local NGO for people with leprosy, said there had since been recorded cases in the districts of Lilongwe, Mangochi, Mchinji, Machinga, Salima, and Zomba. Hafod president Harry Khamalatha said there were 6 cases currently being treated. The health ministry's Controller of Preventive Health Services, Habib Somanje, said the eradication of leprosy did not mean the infection would never resurface. He said the ministry continues to hold awareness campaigns at district level about the disease. He said that internationally, Malawi was still considered as having eradicated leprosy. [View Report](#)

New Species of *Babesia* Behind First Cases of Babesiosis in Austria and Italy

August – The CDC's Journal of Emerging Infectious Diseases reported on a new species of *Babesia* in Europe. In Europe, most reported human cases of [babesiosis](#) have been attributed, without strong molecular evidence, to infection with the bovine parasite *Babesia divergens*. Scientists investigated the first known human cases of babesiosis in Italy and Austria, which occurred in two asplenic men. The complete 18S ribosomal RNA (18S rRNA) gene was amplified from specimens of their whole blood by polymerase chain reaction (PCR). With phylogenetic analysis, they compared the DNA sequences of the PCR products with those for other *Babesia* spp. The DNA sequences were identical for the organism from the two patients. In phylogenetic analysis, the organism clusters with *B. odocoilei*, a parasite of white-tailed deer; these two organisms form a sister group with *B. divergens*. This evidence indicates the patients were not infected with *B. divergens* but with an organism with previously unreported molecular characteristics for the 18S rRNA gene. [View Article](#)

Russia (Omsk): Tick-borne Encephalitis

28 August – ProMed reported 15 cases of [tick-borne encephalitis](#) were registered in the Omsk region of Russia. In the Omsk region, 2262 people reported being bitten by ticks this summer. Fifteen of them, including 4 children, were diagnosed with tick-borne encephalitis according to information provided by the regional center of Federal Sanitary Epidemiological Surveillance. One young man from Bolsherechye admitted to a regional infectious diseases hospital died from encephalitis. The highest level of tick activity was registered in Tarsk, Sedelnikov, Kolosov, Znamensk, Bolsheukovsk, Krutinsk, Muromzevsk, and Tevriz regions. [View Report](#)

UK: Inquiry into Salmonella Outbreak

28 August – ProMed reported health experts are banding together to trace the source of a rare form of [salmonellosis](#) that has affected dozens of people throughout Britain. In August 2003 so far, there have

been 39 confirmed cases of *Salmonella bareilly*. There are 17 confirmed and 3 suspected cases in Scotland, while 22 have been confirmed in England and Wales, plus 3 suspected cases. One elderly woman may even have died as a result of the infection. Experts believe the fact that cases are appearing throughout Britain means there could be a common source. Health authorities affected are said to be working together to locate the origin of the bug, but at this stage they do not know whether it is food-borne. The investigation is being led by the Scottish Center for Infection and Environmental Health (SCIEH) in collaboration with The Food standards Agency. [View Report](#)

Warning as Rubella Risk Returns

01 September – BBC News reported British women who are planning to start a family have been advised to ensure they are protected against [rubella](#). It follows a Japanese study that identified 31 cases of birth defects caused by rubella, also known as German measles. In each case, the mother had been vaccinated against the disease but had since lost her immunity. The finding has sparked concerns that British women could also be putting their children at risk. GPs are supposed to screen women of childbearing age to ensure they are fully protected against rubella. This is because most women who were born before 1988 only received one jab against the disease. [View Article](#)

Water Diseases Causing "Misdiagnosis" in Food Crisis Areas

02 September – AllAfrica.com reported [malaria](#) and [water borne diseases](#) are compounding the famine in Ethiopia and sparking misdiagnosis of food crisis areas, the UN has warned. Poor health and water facilities are also "undermining" the food aid response aimed at combating the unprecedented crisis that has hit the country. And according to the UN's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), it is mainly children who are falling victim to the "vicious cycle" of malnutrition and disease. Widespread malnutrition is disguising and making diseases like malaria hard to spot with the inevitable consequences for the already weakened children, the UN said. Aid agencies say that despite widespread intervention, thousands of children have needed therapeutic feeding at emergency centers. The number of deaths is unknown. [View Article](#)

USCENTCOM

Doctors Say 33 Die of Rift Valley Fever in Egypt

27 August – ProMed reported the WHO has received reports of 45 cases of [Rift Valley fever \(RVF\)](#) including 17 deaths in Seedy Salim District, a remote rural area in Kafr Al-Sheikh Governorate, about 150 kilometres north of Cairo. All cases are Egyptian farmers. The news comes about a week after Health and Population Minister Mohamed Awad Afifi Tag el-Din said an outbreak of the fever in Kafr el-Sheikh had been brought under control, after 4 out of 35 people diagnosed with the fever had died. Medical sources in the governorate could not say how many people in the province had caught the disease so far. Rift Valley fever is primarily transmitted to humans through mosquito bites, and is particularly common during years with unusually heavy rainfall. Saudi Arabia, an importer of Egyptian livestock, has announced a temporary ban on the import of live goats, sheep, camels and gazelles from Egypt due to reports of the disease. [View Report](#) [View Report 2](#)

Kazakhstan: Disturbing Health Statistics from Semipalatinsk

28 August – IRIN News reported a former nuclear testing area in Semipalatinsk, a town in northern Kazakhstan, continues to adversely affect the health of the local population, particularly pregnant

women, new figures show. Nine out of ten pregnant women in the town and in some rural areas nearby are suffering from various diseases due to their immunity system being weak. "Only 10 out of every 100 pregnant women are healthy," Rashida Galimulina, the head of the Semipalatinsk perinatal center, told IRIN from Semipalatinsk, adding that main diseases affecting pregnant women were blood related, like anemia, along with urinary and genital infections, and kidney diseases stemming from very weak immunity. [View Article](#)

USNORTHCOM

Bush Eases Air Pollution Rules

27 August – CBS News reported the Bush administration exempted thousands of older power plants, refineries and factories from having to install costly clean air controls when they modernize with new equipment that improves efficiency but increases pollution. In a major new revision to its air pollution rules, the Environmental Protection Agency will allow up to 20 percent of the costs of replacing each plant's production system to be considered "routine maintenance" that doesn't require costly antipollution controls, according to agency documents obtained by The Associated Press. A typical power plant has more than one "process unit" containing a boiler, generator, turbine and other equipment. In the case of a 1,500-megawatt plant with two 750-megawatt units that cost \$1 billion to replace, each could be upgraded \$200 million at a time, agency officials and outside experts say. The new rule signed by EPA's acting administrator, Marianne L. Horinko, represents a fundamental shift away from a long-problematic 1971 maintenance standard. [View Article](#)

FDA OKs Herpes Drug Claims

29 August – CBS News reported a drug widely used to treat [genital herpes](#) can now be touted as a way to help prevent the virus' spread as well, the Food and Drug Administration ruled. Valtrex (valacyclovir) treats herpes flare-ups by suppressing the virus. A recent study tracked whether that suppression would be enough to also protect an infected person's sexual partner. Researchers enrolled almost 1,500 couples in which one partner had herpes and the other didn't, and gave the infected partners either Valtrex or a dummy pill once a day. Valtrex use cut in half the healthy partner's risk of becoming infected. Based on that study, the FDA ruled that manufacturer GlaxoSmithKline now can advertise Valtrex to reduce the risk of spreading herpes when used in combination with safer-sex practices -- condom use and abstinence during outbreaks. [View Article](#)

Florida: Health Officials Discover 2 New Malaria Cases in Palm Beach County

27 August – ProMed reported Health officials have discovered 2 more cases of [malaria](#) in Palm Beach County. The total number of cases is now 7. Tim O'Connor, spokesman for the Palm Beach County Health Department, said the 2 latest cases, a 17-year-old boy and a 48-year-old man, are unrelated and not geographically close together, although they fall within a 3-mile zone -- the distance mosquitoes can fly -- of the first 2 confirmed cases in the Lake Worth area. That many locally acquired cases of a disease that is not normally present in the United States is "highly unusual," said Dr. Carina Blackmore, an expert in mosquito-borne diseases at the state Health Department. Blackmore said there usually are a few cases each year in which people are infected with malaria by mosquitoes that bite someone who brought it in from outside the country. But usually it's only one or two cases. Blood specimens from the malaria-infected people are being analyzed by the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to see how closely they match each other, and to determine other characteristics of the disease, she said. The rising number of cases increases the possibility of a 2nd

and 3rd wave of malaria. Dr. Jean Malecki, director of the Palm Beach County Health Department, issued a public-health directive on Monday for health care workers to be vigilant in testing for malaria. While hospitals are on alert, the 15 employees of the county's mosquito control office have been working overtime to hunt, kill and collect the insects across the county. [View Report](#)

Health Problems Persist in WTC Workers

28 August – CNN News reported nearly two years after the World Trade Center attack, a medical screening program continues to reveal a surprisingly high rate of physical and mental problems among cleanup and rescue workers. About 48 percent of workers screened had ear, nose and throat problems such as nasal congestion, hoarseness, headaches and throat irritation, according to the latest figures. Thirty percent had pulmonary problems, including shortness of breath, persistent cough and wheezing. The data reflect patients screened between July 2002 and April 2003. But the director of the program's medical component said patients have continued to report symptoms at about the same rate since then. [View Article](#)

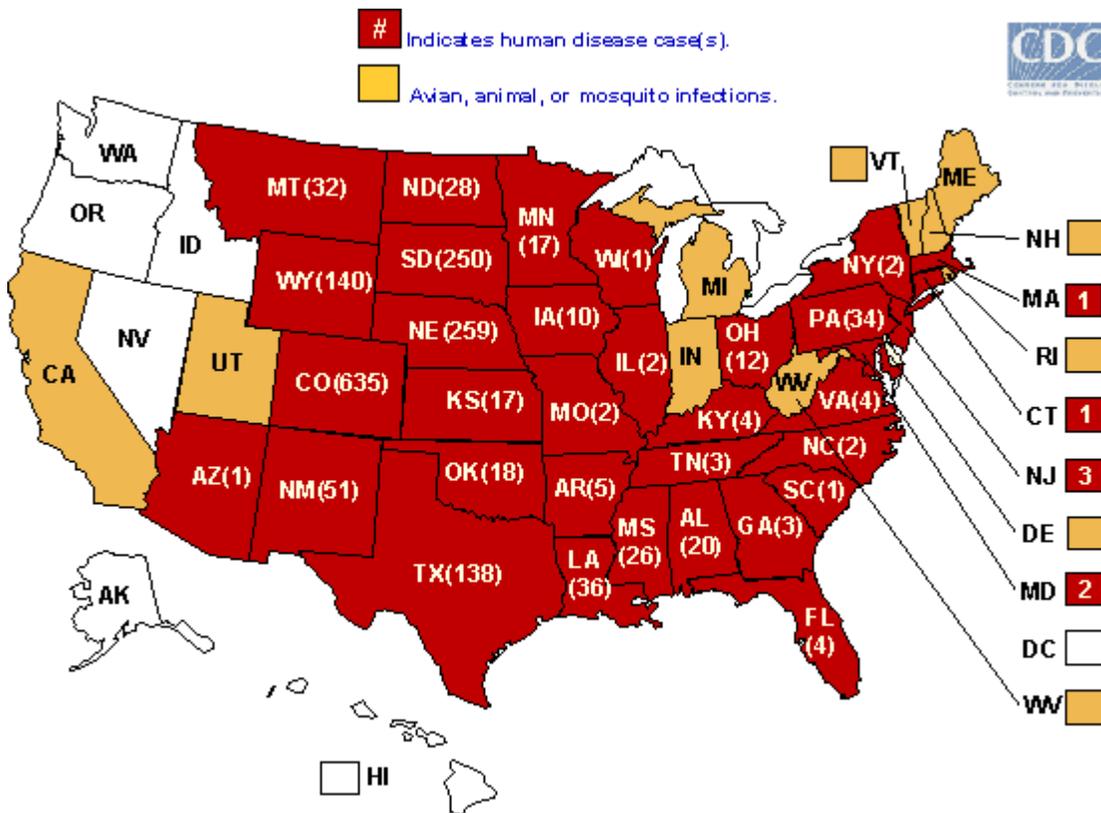
Massachusetts: Tickborne Illness on Rise in Western Part of State

03 September – ProMed reported Massachusetts state health officials and local physicians are warning of a sharp rise in the number of cases of [ehrlichiosis](#), a tickborne illness that has sickened 73 Berkshire County residents so far in 2003. The variety of ehrlichiosis that is affecting the Berkshires is called human granulocytic ehrlichiosis (HGE), and was first recognized in 1993. The extent of illness can vary widely for someone infected with HGE, from no symptoms at all to severe symptoms that can cause death. For 2002, the state had 5 probable or suspected cases in the Berkshires, compared with 113 statewide. The previous year there were no Berkshire cases, and 25 probable or suspected cases statewide. [View Report](#)

Moonshine Breaks From Backwoods

28 August - CBS News reported moonshine is being brewed in the heart of Atlanta, and it's making people sick, according to a new study. Moonshine — known as "corn liquor" — is made in inner-city stills and sold in "cornhouses," or makeshift bars, for \$1.25 a shot or around \$2.50 a pint, said Dr. Brent Morgan of Emory University. University researchers conducted a survey at Atlanta's Grady Memorial Hospital after doctors noticed emergency room patients were turning up with [lead poisoning](#) from moonshine. The survey, reported in the September issue of the *Annals of Emergency Medicine*, found that nearly 9 percent of emergency room patients said they had consumed moonshine in the last five years. [View Article](#)

West Nile Virus in the United States as of 2 September, 2003



[View Source](#)

Young Girl Diagnosed with Tularemia

02 September – ProMed reported an 18-month-old girl who suffered from swollen glands, lethargy, and a fever after being bitten by an insect was diagnosed with [tularemia](#). Sweetwater County Health Department public health nurse Jodye Wilmes said generally there are usually 2 to 6 tularemia cases reported a year, mainly by adult men. A child contracting the disease is unusual. The girl's mother said that on the first day, the bite just looked like a swollen mosquito bite. Over the next few days the bite crusted over, turned white from pus, then began to turn black. The child's other symptoms included swollen lymph nodes and lethargy. The child would sweat profusely when she didn't have a fever, and with a fever wouldn't sweat at all. The form of the infection involving skin ulcers and lymph node enlargement is usually acquired by bites by a deer fly or tick or from skinning a rabbit. [View Report](#)

USPACOM

Asia Leaders Ignore Looming AIDS Crisis-U.N. Envoy

02 September – Reuters reported Asian leaders are ignoring a looming "African-style" [HIV/AIDS](#) crisis that threatens the region's economic and social development, a United Nations special envoy said. "Some leaders have buried themselves in the illusion that HIV/AIDS is not really an Asian problem -- that the infection will somehow restrict itself to the high-risk groups," Nafis Sadik told a U.N. conference

on health and poverty. "This is a denial of reality," she told the meeting, attended by ministers and officials from 47 Asia-Pacific countries. Sadik, special U.N. envoy for HIV/AIDS in Asia, did not identify which Asian leaders she thought were not facing up to the AIDS threat. While infection rates are far lower than in southern Africa, the global epicenter of the disease, experts say the Asia-Pacific region may account for 40 percent of new global infections by 2010 if prevention efforts are not stepped up.

[View Article](#)

India (Karnataka): Anthrax, Human & Livestock

28 August – ProMed reported 12 persons in a Dalit colony at Torenur in Somwarpet taluk of Kodagu district are reported to be suffering from [anthrax](#). One of the 12 affected persons has been moved to K.R. Hospital in Mysore. The others are being treated at Torenur at a special clinic. It is said that the 12 had developed skin lesions and ulceration. More than a dozen cattle died at Torenur recently under mysterious circumstances. A few days ago deaths of vultures, crows, and stray dogs that had fed on the carcasses of dead cattle came to light. One calf died today. Anthrax cases were noticed at Shirangala in Hassan district a few days ago. Deputy Director Srinivasulu of the Department of Communicable Diseases, Bangalore, visited the affected areas and instructed those concerned to take care to prevent the disease from spreading. [View Report](#)

India: Capital City of Goa Affected by Outbreak of Jaundice

27 August – ProMed reported Goa's capital seems to be in the grip of a jaundice attack, with 123 cases reported so far. The jaundice attack, diagnosed as [hepatitis E virus](#) infection by the authorities, has spread without warning around the central Cine Nazionale-Azad Maidan area of Panjim. It is believed to have been caused by the flow of filthy water from the kitchen of a local hotel into the main pipeline. Goa Health Minister Suresh Amonkar appealed to city residents and restaurants to consume boiled water. The government has also dropped hints of "stern action" against unhygienic restaurants and roadside kiosks. Authorities have called on citizens to avoid fruits or juices sold "on the roadside" and ice-candies from "unapproved sources". The warnings say only freshly cooked food should be eaten when hot. They remind medical practitioners that they should notify [the authorities of] any cases of the disease. [View Report](#)

Thousands Flee China Floods

01 September – BBC News reported up to 120,000 people in northern Shaanxi province have been relocated after floods and landslides destroyed 10,000 homes, reports say. China's state news agency Xinhua said continuous rain since 24 August has caused flooding in more than 50 rivers in Shaanxi. It said 26 people have been killed so far in Shaanxi since the start of the bad weather. The Shaanxi Provincial Flood Control and Drought Relief Headquarters has allocated 20 rubber boats and 1,000 life jackets to the counties along the Wei River. The Wei - the main tributary to the Yellow River - is experiencing its worst flood peak in 22 years. [View Article](#)

Three Deaths Spark New Zealand Medical Alert

28 August – The Canadian Press reported New Zealand health authorities went on high alert Thursday as medical specialists struggled to unravel the cause of three sudden, unexplained deaths in the southern city of Dunedin in the last two weeks. The three cases, a woman and two men in their 40s and 50s, had no obvious risk factors and would not normally die suddenly. All three fell ill suddenly and died within hours. Initial tests suggested they all died of pulmonary hemorrhage, or bleeding in their lungs. All three came from the same part of the city and had been healthy before suddenly falling ill and dying,

two within an hour of displaying symptoms. Investigations suggested the three were not related and there was no obvious contact among them. Investigations so far have not been able to identify any virus or bacteria linked to the deaths. No other related deaths have been reported in the city. Samples from the three victims were being sent to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta, Georgia, for testing. [View Article](#) [View ProMed Report](#)

USPACOM Dengue Fever Update

02 September – ProMed reported on the following [Dengue Fever](#) outbreaks: From 1 Jan to 26 Aug 2003 dengue fever has claimed 6 lives and left 2,371 infected in Vientiane City, Laos (population of over half million). The Vientiane City's Public Health Service has urged the people to destroy mosquitoes and mosquito-breeding sources, keeping houses and villages clean. In India, There has been a fresh outbreak of dengue in Kanyakumari district. A number of children have died. A medical team under the additional director of public health, have already arrived from Chennai and launched an awareness campaign. An official said the health and municipal authorities had already launched anti-larval and fogging operations. In the Philippines, the Integrated Provincial Health Office (IPHO) confirmed that the dengue outbreak that killed 37 people, most of whom were schoolchildren in Negros Oriental, is now under control. IPHO records show Dumaguete City with 62 cases still leading the list of the province's 20 towns and 5 cities in the province out of 122 individuals affected by dengue from January to June this year [2003]. [View Report](#)

USSOUTHCOM

Determinants of Clearance of Human Papillomavirus Infections in Colombian Women with Normal Cytology

01 September – The American Journal of Epidemiology reported little is known about the factors that influence clearance of [human papillomavirus \(HPV\)](#), the primary cause of cervical carcinoma. In this study, a total of 227 women cytologically normal and HPV positive at baseline were identified from a population-based cohort of 1,995 women in Bogotá, Colombia. The women in the cohort were between 13–85 years old and were followed between 1993 and 2000 (mean follow-up, 5.3 years). The researchers found faster clearance of HPV in users of oral contraceptives. [View Article](#)

USSOUTHCOM Dengue Fever Update

02 September – ProMed reported from January 2003 up to 26 Aug 2003, El Salvador has registered 821 cases of [Dengue Fever](#) and 58 cases of dengue hemorrhagic fever. Four children have died. According to data from the National Foundation for Health, the Northeast Region of Brazil has had 132,645 cases of dengue, with 129,932 occurring in the first 6 months of 2003. This is a reduction of 50 per cent over the same period in 2002. The states of Piaui and Ceara have been the worst affected, and in contrast to the rest of the region have shown an increase in cases, of 72 per cent and 11 per cent, respectively, over the same period of 2002. [View Report](#)

Trinidad: Undiagnosed Illness

27 August – ProMed reported The Medical Professionals Association of Trinidad and Tobago (MPATT) provided figures from a laboratory in south Trinidad to support the view that there is a problem with an

unidentified virus as well as [dengue](#). MPATT was responding to Health Minister Colm Imbert's assertion of a political motive behind reports of a high number of suspected dengue cases at San Fernando General Hospital. In a statement last Thursday, MPATT referred to a major laboratory in San Fernando that received 192 blood samples for testing for patients suspected of having dengue fever. While 81 were positive for acute virus infection and 42 of them exhibited profiles supporting previous dengue infection, there were 111 cases whose cause of illness was not determined. "The vast majority were jaundiced and bedridden." [View Report](#)

Venezuela: Yellow Fever Alert

02 September – ProMed reported the epidemiological authorities of the state of Merida, in the west of Venezuela, have declared a health alert due to the possibility of an outbreak of [Yellow Fever](#). The decision to issue the alert was made after 12 deaths from the disease were registered in the border states of Tachira and Zulia. The authorities consider 10 municipalities in the state of Merida to be areas of high risk and have, for this reason, initiated a vaccination campaign to prevent the disease from spreading. [View Report](#)

Please contact the below-listed POC for suggested improvements and/or comments regarding this report. This report is also available on the USACHPPM website at <http://chppm-www.apgea.army.mil/Hioupdate/>.

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